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THE LAMP
OF POOR SOULS
AND OTHER POEMS



"Lay Thou the hand of faith upon my fears"

The Lamp of Poor Souls (Page 13.

The
LAMP *of* POOR SOULS

AND OTHER POEMS

BY
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IN MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER

281715

The greater number of these poems appeared in an earlier volume, "The Drift of Pinions." My thanks are due to Messrs. Scribner's for allowing me to include "Mary Shepherdess" among the poems hitherto unpublished in book form, and to the University Magazine of Montreal for much kindness in connection with the work that has appeared in their pages.

M. L. C. P.

England, 1916.

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THE LAMP
OF POOR SOULS
AND OTHER POEMS

The Lamp of Poor Souls

In many English churches before the Reformation there was kept a little lamp continually burning, called the Lamp of Poor Souls. People were reminded thereby to pray for the souls of those dead whose kinsfolk were too poor to pay for prayers and masses.

ABOVE my head the shields are stained with rust,
The wind has taken his spoil, the moth his part ;
Dust of dead men beneath my knees, and dust,
Lord, in my heart.

Lay 'Thou the hand of faith upon my fears ;
The priest has prayed, the silver bell has rung,
But not for him. O unforgotten tears,
He was so young !

Shine, little lamp, nor let thy light grow dim.
Into what vast, dread dreams, what lonely lands,
Into what griefs hath death delivered him,
Far from my hands ?

The Lamp of Poor Souls

Cradled is he, with half his prayers forgot.
I cannot learn the level way he goes.
He whom the harvest hath remembered not
Sleeps with the rose.

Shine, little lamp, fed with sweet oil of prayers.
Shine, little lamp, as God's own eyes may shine,
When He treads softly down His starry stairs
And whispers, "Thou art Mine."

Shine, little lamp, for love hath fed thy gleam.
Sleep, little soul, by God's own hands set free.
Cling to His arms and sleep, and sleeping, dream,
And dreaming, look for me.

Song

I SHALL not go with pain
Whether you hold me, whether you forget
My little loss and my immortal gain.
O flower unseen, O fountain sealed apart!
Give me one look, one look remembering yet,
Sweet heart.

I shall not go with grief,
Whether you call me, whether you deny
The crowning vintage and the golden sheaf.
O, April hopes that blossom but to close!
Give me one look, one look and so good-bye,
Red rose.

I shall not go with sighs,
But as full-crowned the warrior leaves the fight,
Dawn on his shield and death upon his eyes.
O, life so bitter-sweet and heaven so far!
Give me one look, one look and so good night,
My star.

Birds at Evening

WHEN the rooks fly homeward, and the gulls
are following high,
And the grey feet of the silence with a silver
dream are shod,
I mind me of the little wings abroad in every sky
Who seek their sleep of God.

When the dove is hidden, and the dew is white
on the corn,
And the dark bee in the heather, and the shepherd
with the sheep,
I mind me of the little wings in the holm-oak
and the thorn
Who take of Him their sleep.

When the brier closes and the iris-flower is
furled,
And over the edge of the evening the martin
knows her nest,

Birds at Evening

I mind me of the little hearts abroad in all the
world

Who find in Him their rest.

Improvisation on the Flute

MY lost delight, my guest,
Fled from me when I stirred,
Silently as the bird
That has no nest.

She has gathered darkness to build her a nest
And the little leaves of cloud.
She crouches with her breast against darkness,
And hides as a hare in the meadows of night.
It covers her like long grass
Whose blossom is all of stars;
Crocus-stars, stars of anemone,
Where cling the moths that are the longings of
men.
She is born of the evening,
When the moon breathes the scent of young
thyme,
And the dead shepherds hear the sheep cropping
in the dew.

Improvisation on the Flute

She is slain of the morning,
When the thin willow-leaves tremble like fire
Burning the branches,
As if each were a sorrow that burned and shone
Forever.

My shadow, my desire,
Come to me, listen, and stay,
Ah, never?

With the day
She is gone, she is gone
Away
Forever——

My guest, my lost delight,
Come nearer, star by star.
Sweet as the lips of night
Your kisses are.

An Epitaph

FRIEND, pass softly. Here is one
Morning spent her gold upon;
Suns enriched her, and the beat
Of April's tide flowed at her feet.
With each blossom, lovelier she;
Lovelier she with every leaf.
Spring forgets her now, and we
Count her summers by our grief.

Salutaris Hostia

WHEN the moon is last awake,
Silver-thin above the fields,
Crushed, like roses, for Thy sake,
All my soul its fragrance yields.
All my hungry heart is fed
Sundering sweetness like a sword,
O my Lord,
Hidden within Thy broken bread.

Hands of morning, take the cup
Whence the Life of Love is drained;
Hold it, raise it, lift it up
Till the lucent heavens be stained.
Joy and sorrow, lip to lip,
Lost in likeness at the end,
O my Friend,
Taste Thy wine of fellowship.

Salutaris Hostia

All life's splendour, all life's pride,
Dust are they. I lay them down.
They were thorns that when You died
Wove for You a wounding crown.
But the brier of death's in bud,
All its loveliness he knows,
Sharon's Rose,
That has shared Thy flesh and blood.

Mary Shepherdess

WHEN the heron's in the high wood and the
last long furrow's sown,
With the herded cloud before her
and her sea-sweet raiment blown,
Comes Mary, Mary Shepherdess, a-seeking for
her own.

Saint James he calls the righteous folk, Saint
John he calls the kind,
Saint Peter seeks the valiant men all to loose
or bind,
But Mary seeks the little souls that are so hard
to find.

All the little sighing souls born of dust's despair,
They who fed on bitter bread when the world
was bare,
Frighted of the glory gates and the starry stair.

Mary Shepherdess

All about the windy down, housing in the ling,
Underneath the alder bough linnet-light they
cling,
Frighted of the shining house where the martyrs
sing.

Crying in the ivy-bloom, fingering at the pane,
Grieving in the hollow dark, lone along the
rain,—
Mary, Mary Shepherdess gathers them again.

And O, the wandering women know, in work-
house and in shed,
They dream on Mary Shepherdess with doves
about her head,
And pleasant posies in her hand, and sorrow com-
forted.

Saying: There's my little lass, faring fine and
free,
There's the little lad I laid by the holly tree.
Dreaming: There's my nameless bairn laughing
at her knee.

Mary Shepherdess

When the bracken-harvest's gathered and the
frost is on the loam,
When the dream goes out in silence and the ebb
runs out in foam,
Mary, Mary Shepherdess, she bids the lost lambs
home.

If I had a little maid to turn my tears away,
If I had a little lad to lead me when I'm grey,
All to Mary Shepherdess they'd fold their hands
and pray.

Vale

PASS on, beloved. I seek no sign of you
Of faith, or faith's farewell.
All that I had, I hold divine of you;
Before these shadows fell
I wrought for you an altar and a crown
Too dear for death to dim, or life cast down.

Pass on, my heart. I ask no care of you,
To hold all time in trust.
It is enough I keep my share of you
A little from the dust.
And when immortal morning opes her door,
Pass through, my dream. You do not leave me
poor.

Pass on, beloved. I ask no grief of you,
No sadness, no regret.
Those days, those nights, a garnered sheaf of you,
Are in my treasury yet;

Vale

And there, beyond the laurels and the doves—
Is it your face, or is it only love's?

Yea, you are one, you twain who dwelled to-
gether,

And lovers in this place,

Dark with green silence under the gold weather,
Shall see one star-like face,

And name you love, and linger, and draw near,
Happy to know what gods were worshipped here.

Two Lyrics

I

ALL in a rainy hazel wood
I watched the hyacinth break
Her lucent sheath, as if she could
Make summer for your sake.

And year by year the hyacinth-tide
Breaks in a foam of flowers
For other loves than we denied
And other griefs than ours.

Long wed, long dead, so I've been told,
But still when Spring's set free,
All in a drift of rainy gold
You walk the wood with me.

II

How looked she when she breathed good-bye?
Most like a bird, whose breast

Two Lyrics

Across a thousand wastes of sky
Is constant to her nest.

How looked she when she turned away?
Most as a spirit might,
Who shared our sorrow for a day
Yet kept her home in sight.

O, looked she sad or seemed she glad?
Most like a star, that knows
Only the loveliness it had,
The light to which it goes.

On Amaryllis

A Tortoyse

MY name was Amaryllis. I
From a harde Shell put forthe to fly;
No Bird, alas! with Beautie prim'd,
Hath Death th' inconstant Fowler lim'd.
No antick Moth on Blossoms set
Hath Judgement taken in a Net.
So dull, so slowe, so meeke I went
In my House-Roof that pay'd no Rent,
E'en my deare Mistresse guess'd no Spark
Could e'er enlight'n my dustie Dark.

Judge not, ye Proud. Each lowlie Thing
May lack the Voyce, not Heart, to sing.
The Worme that from the Moulde suspires
May be attun'd with heavenlie Quires,
And I, a-crawling in my Straw,
Was moved by Love, and made by Law.

On Amaryllis

So all ye wise, who 'neath your Clod
Go creeping onwards up to God,
Take Heart of me, who by His Grace,
Slough'd off my Pris'n and won my Race.

Wiltshire

I DIED o' cider and taters
When I wer a-turned four-score.
Us always wer hearty aters,
My feyther he wer afore.

And the Laard dun't hold I a sinner,
The neighbourly angel said,
Because I wer set on my dinner,
For a man must goo full-fed.

But now I be done wi' feedin',
And a taaste at the market-town.
'Tis all so idle as Eden
In the great grey lift o' the down.

Over the turv and the tillage
The angels gossip in pairs,
Most like to folk in the village
When the pigs was fat for the fairs.

Wiltshire

Over the hill goos Master,
Wi' a tarrible flock o' sheep,
Peace is the chosen pastur',
The Laard He doth us keep.

Now I be laid in the grasses,
For I come a gaate of a way,
And I hear how the Master passes
The folk wi' the time o' day.

But I wun't be idle longer,
Laid here i' the bloom and the seed,
I'll goo to He when I'm stronger.
He'll give I lambs to lead.

I'll ask but six or seven,
And I'll lay, when the hurdling's done,
On the great green downs o' heaven,
And sleep in the livin' Sun.

Gold Dawn

DAY came like a dove
To the apple trees and the wheat,
Her feathers were golden as love
And silver her feet.

A song or a shower
Shook the sweet leaf-shadows apart,
And like the white moth on the flower
Clung the dream to my heart.

And I know not now
What the dawn made dear to me there,
But gold was the light on the bough
And silver the air.

Departure

SHE went. She left no trace to find her,
No word with wind or flower,
No rose, no rose let fall behind her
That lasted but an hour.

She went. She left no following voices,
No sign with star or stream,
Yet still the dreaming earth rejoices
It knew her from a dream.

Dimitte Mortuos

REMEMBER? Nay, they'll not remember
Long, ere the spark
Of every breath-warmed, love-lit ember
Die in the dark.

Grieve? Would you burden them with grieving?
Tears, while you slept?
Or is this haunted world you're leaving
Worthily wept?

Here on the shore the sweet sea's giving
Has left, O man,
A flower of pearl, a flake, outliving
Thy loftiest span.

Raise, with the hand that death is taking,
The brimming shell,
And wish them, half 'twixt sleep and waking,
Hail and farewell.

Song

O, LIFE is as a flower is, and my days go down
Like the ships with their lading from the star-
white town.

Their holds are full of apples, and my days go
from me
Like the fruit-sweet sails that are lost over sea.

O, some have willow-baskets a-swinging in the
hold

And some have hawthorn-honey in pots all of
gold,

And some have seeds of moonwort and thyme and
rosemary

For the little island children that are weary of
the sea.

O, moonwort of the winter was silvered for a
bride

In a low green garden that never knew the tide,

Song

And the rosemary was gathered and the thyme
grown free

By a river and a rosebush and a round yew tree.

The thyme will crown the sheep-walks, the rose-
mary will grow

Sea-grey along the sea-marks, but I shall never
know.

For life is as a leaf is, and like a flower it fails
With the last light of heaven on the fruit-sweet
sails.

Travellers'-Joy

LAD of my heart, there's never a rose
In the oak-carr or the grey gorse cover,
But the young year dances, the old year goes
To the way of a lass and the way of her lover.
Up, we must up, for the moon's a-chill,
And love and a song alike grow still.
The swift wings gather, the strong wings wait,
And travellers'-joy goes over the gate.

Virgin's-bower for the milk-foot May
And the brown wood-runners that range behind
her;
When the rains come and the world's in grey,
Who shall beckon her, who shall bind her?
Fled, she is fled with the starry fire,
And the orchards blossoming, shire on shire,
But the young moon silvers the evening's edge,
And travellers'-joy goes over the hedge.

Travellers'-Joy

Old-man's-beard for the journey's end,
The ways that wearied, the paths that tried us,
But Death the lover and Sleep the friend,
Tall as the angels, tramp beside us.
Far hills calling us, peak on peak,
A road to find and a rest to seek,
—Youth goes lightly and love goes brave,
But travellers'-joy goes over the grave.

The Young Baptist

A SLEEKED mimosa hid him from the rain.
He saw the quickened valleys gleam and go
And the clouds break upon a hundred hills,
Till all the happy silence had a sound,
Voice upon voice, small as the voice of God
In Sinai, but the earth shook under them.
He saw the moonlit rafters of the world,
Hollowed in thunder, walled with exquisite air,
Most beautiful. The leaves were laced with
showers,
And motionless beneath them couched the flies,
Bright as small seraphs lately loosed from heaven
Upon the river'd garden beautiful.
Beautiful they, and beautiful the bird
That flashed on him a sudden breast and fled.
Over a fire of twisted camel-thorn
He saw the vast recessional of day
And shivered against the dark, and knew no rest ;

The Young Baptist

Yet even the dark was lovely. Only he
Was worn with hungering after righteousness,
Fouled with strange suffering, dim with many
dreams.

The foxes barked against him all night long.

Dawn rose in silver, shepherding few stars.
He watched it, all one hunger, body and soul.
"There is a painted house in Nazareth,"
He said, "once held a little friend, clear-eyed.
There all day long the whining plane moves over
The curded length of olive wood, and light
Bright shavings make the footfall cedar-sweet.
A woman sits there in the shadow of leaves,
Watching her men at work, two carpenters,
While mirrored angels move in her still eyes.
Yea, is it time? Shall one lay down His tools
And turn away? To-night the fly shall sleep
In lily or white cyclamen, the bird
Shall find the shittim tree that held her brood.
Shall I be homeless? Lily of Israel, bloom.
O Tree of Life, make ready my soul's nest.

The Young Baptist

Yea, is He come?"

But only morning came,
Clear-footed from the frontiers of the world,
And beat his little fire out as with spears.
Beautiful on the mountains were her feet.

Armored

WHEN within the rippling tide
Shakes the silver-pointed moon,
When the rainbow flies of noon
All have died,
When the bats go wheeling far,
And the mournful owl has cried
Twice or thrice a-down the glen
Grey with gathering shade, and when
Gates o' dream are held ajar,—
From the alders in the dell,
From the bracken fronds astir,
Elfin voices call to her,—
“Armored!”

She shall glide the garden down,
Treading softly, treading slow,
And with silent feet shall go

Armored

Past the Mary-lilies white,
Past the pansies, gold and brown,
Grown for her delight.
One white moth her guide shall be,
She shall follow where he flies,
Patiently, with dream-lit eyes;
Past the thyme and savoury,
Past the mystic asphodel;
For the voices in her ear
Call her softly, call her clear,—
“Armored!”

Into valleys strange and dim,
All unseen and all unknown,
Fleetly shall she follow him,
Fairy-led, alone.
She shall hear within the brake
Elfin crickets pipe and sing,
While the elfin spiders make
Sendal for her furnishing,
Red as pimpernel.
She shall see the dreams go by,
Silver-pinioned, through the sky;

Armored

Where she wanders none may tell,
But the voices come and go,
Calling sweetly, calling low,
"Armored!"

The Little Fauns to Proserpine

BROWNER than the hazel-husk, swifter than the
wind,
Though you turn from heath and hill, we are
hard behind,
Singing, "Ere the sorrows rise, ere the gates un-
close
Bind above your wistful eyes the memory of a
rose."

Dark Iacchus pipes the kine shivering from the
whin,
Wraps him in a she-goat's fell above the panther
skin.
Now we husk the corn for bread, turn the mill
for hire.
Hoof by hoof and head by head about the herds-
man's fire.

The Little Fauns to Proserpine

Ai, Adonis, where he gleams, slender and at rest,
One has built a roof of dreams where the white
doves nest.

Ere they bring the wine-dark bowl, ere the gates
unbar,

Take, O take within your soul the shadow of a
star.

Now the vintage feast is done, now the melons
glow

Gold along the raftered thatch beneath a thread
of snow.

Dian's bugle bids the dawn sweep the upland
clear,

Where we snared the silken fawn, where we ran
the deer.

Through the dark reeds wet with rain, past the
singing foam

Went the light-foot Mysian maids, calling Hylas
home.

Syrinx felt the silver spell fold her at her need.
Hear, ere yet you say farewell, the wind along
the reed.

The Little Fauns to Proserpine

Golden as the earliest leaf loosened from the
spray,

Grave Alcestis drank of grief for her lord's delay.

Ere you choose the bitter part, learn the change-
less wrong,

Bind above your breaking heart the echo of a
song.

Now the chestnut burrs are down; aspenshaws
are pale;

Now across the plunging reef reels the last red
sail.

Ere the wild, black horses cry, ere the night has
birth,

Take, ere yet you say good-bye, the love of all
the earth.

Wanderlied

O, WEST of all the westward roads that woo ye
to their winding,

O, south of all the southward ways that call ye
to the sea,

There's a little lonely garden that would pay
ye for the finding,

With a fairy-ring within it and an old thorn
tree.

O, there upon the brink of morn the thrushes
would be calling,

And the little lilting linnets, sure they'd wake
me from the dead;

With the lime trees all in blossom and the soft
leaf-shadows falling,

O, there I'd have a place at last to lay my head.

O, would I had a swallow's wings, for then I'd
fly and find it;

Wanderlied

O, would I had a swallow's heart, for then I'd
love to roam!

With an orchard on the hillside and an old, old
man to mind it,

O, there I'd lift my lodge at last and make my
home.

O, there I'd see the tide come in along the whis-
pering reaches,

O, there I'd lie and watch the sails go shining
to the west.

And where the fir-wood follows on the wide un-
swerving beaches,

It's there I'd lay me down at last and take my
rest.

To Alcithoë

IN your dim Greece of old, Alcithoë,
Death like a lover sought and crowned you
young,

Between the olive orchards and the sea.

When they had twined your myrtle-buds, and
hung

The stately cypress at your door, they said,

"Alcithoë is dead,

Before whose feet the flaming crocus sprung,

For whom the red rose opened ere the prime;

Those the gods love are taken before their
time."—

Ah! why did no one, watching you alone,

Snare your dead beauty in undying stone?

The gold hair bound beneath its golden band,

The milk-white poppies closed within your hand;

That the harsh world a little space might keep

The last, still, exquisite vision of your sleep.

The Sea Witch

ENDLESSLY fell her chestnut flowers,
Faint snow throughout the honeyed dark;
The myrtle spread his boughs to drink
Deep draughts of salt from the sea's brink,
And like a moon-dial swung her tower's
Straight shadow o'er her warded park.

From her calm coasts the galleons fled,
The fisher steered him farther west,
No port was hailed, no keel came home
Across that pale, enchanted foam,
But by her roof the thrushes fed
And wandering swallows found their rest.

The shadows touched her tenderly,
The red beam lingered on her dress;
The white gull and the osprey knew
Her tower across the leagues of blue.
The wild swan when he sought the sea
Was laggard through her loveliness.

The Immortal

BEAUTY is still immortal in our eyes;
When sways no more the spirit-haunted reed,
When the wild grape shall build
No more her canopies,
When blows no more the moon-grey thistle seed,
When the last bell has lulled the white flocks
 home,
When the last eve has stilled
The wandering wing and touched the dying
 foam,
When the last moon burns low, and, spark by
 spark,
The little worlds die out along the dark,—

Beauty that rosed the moth-wing, touched the
 land

With clover-horns and delicate faint flowers,
Beauty that bade the showers

The Immortal

Beat on the violet's face,
Shall hold the eternal heavens within their place
And hear new stars come singing from God's
hand.

Dawn

O, KEEP the world forever at the dawn,
Ere yet the opals, cobweb-strung, have dried,
Ere yet too bounteous gifts have marred the morn
Or fading stars have died.
O, keep the eastern gold no wider than
An angel's finger-span,
And hush the increasing thunder of the sea
To murmuring melody
In those fair coves where tempests ne'er should be.

Hold back the line of shoreward-sweeping surge
And veil each deep sea-pool in pearlier mist,
Ere yet the silver ripples on the verge
Have turned to amethyst.
Fling back the chariot of encroaching day
And call the winds away
Ere yet they sigh, and let the hastening sun
Along his path in heaven no higher run,

Dawn

But show through all the years his golden rim
With shadows lingering dim
Forever o'er the world awaiting him.

Hold every bird with still and drowsy wing,
That in the breathless hush no clamorous throat
Shall break the peace that hangs on everything
With shrill awakening note;
Keep fast the half-seen beauties of the rose
In undisturbed repose,
Check all the iris buds where they unfold
Impatient from their hold,
And close the cowslips' cups of honeyed gold.

Keep all things hushed, so hushed we seem to hear
The sounds of low-swung clouds that sweep the
trees;

Let now no harsher music reach the ear,
No earthlier sounds than these,
When whispering shadows move within the
grass,
And airy tremors pass

Dawn

Through all the earth with life awakening
thrilled,
And so forever stilled,
Too sweet in promise e'er to be fulfilled.

O, keep the world forever at the dawn,
Yet, keeping so, let nothing lifeless seem,
But hushed, as if the miracle of morn
Were trembling in its dream.
Some shadowy moth may pass with downy flight
And fade before the sight,
While in the unlightened darkness of the wall
The chirping crickets call;
From forest pools where fragrant lilies are
A breath shall pass afar,
And o'er the crested pine shall hang one star.

Evening

WHEN the white iris folds the drowsing bee,
When the first cricket wakes
The fairy hosts of his enchanted brakes,
When the dark moth has sought the lilac tree,
And the young stars, like jasmine of the skies,
Are opening on the silence, Lord, there lies
Dew on Thy rose and dream upon mine eyes. .

Lovely the day, when life is robed in splendour,
Walking the ways of God and strong with wine,
But the pale eve is wonderful and tender,
And night is more divine.
Fold my faint olives from their shimmering plain,
O shadow of sweet darkness fringed with rain.
Give me tonight again.

Give me today no more. I have bethought me
Silence is more than laughter, sleep than tears.

Evening

Sleep like a lover faithfully hath sought me
Down the enduring years.

Where stray the first white fatlings of the fold,
Where the Lent-lily droops her earlier gold
Sleep waits me as of old.

Grant me sweet sleep, for light is unavailing
When patient eyes grow weary of the day.
Young lambs creep close and tender wings are
failing,

And I grow tired as they.

Light as the long wave leaves the lonely shore,
Our boughs have lost the bloom that morning
bore.

Give me today no more.

The Green Month

WHAT of all the colours shall I bring you for
your fairing,

Fit to lay your fingers on, fine enough for you?—

Yellow for the ripened rye, white for ladies'
wearing,

Red for briar-roses, or the skies' own blue?

Nay, for spring has touched the elm, spring has
found the willow,

Winds that call the swallow home sway the
boughs apart;

Green shall all my curtains be, green shall be my
pillow,

Green I'll wear within my hair, and green upon
my heart.

Song of Late September

IN this irised net I keep
All the moth-winged winds of sleep,
In this basket woven of willow
I have silk-weed for your pillow.
In this pouch of plaited reeds
Stars I bear for silver beads.
Choose my pippins for your money,
Reddening pears as smooth as honey,
Golden grapes and apricots,
Herbs from well-grown garden plots;
Basil, balm, and savoury,
All sweet-smelling things there be,
Fruits a many and flowers a few,—
Fiery dahlias drooped in dew,
Wood-grown asters faint as smoke,
Flame of maple, frond of oak.

In this box of foreign woods
I have delicate woven goods;

Song of Late September

Orient laces light as mist,
Amber veils and amethyst,
Ivory pins like hardened milk,
Cloaks of silver-shining silk
Wrought with strange embroideries
Of peacock plumes and rose-berries.
Buy a king's crown lost of old,
Dark with sardius sunk in gold.
Buy my gloves of spiders spun,
Cool as water, warm as sun;
Buy my shoon of yellow leathers
Lined with fur and owlet feathers;
Buy a chain of emerald stones
Or scarlet seeds or cedar cones.
All sweet, delicate things there be
Honest folk may buy of me.
Ere the earliest thrush has flown
In my eyes the dawns are shown.
On my lips the summer lingers,
Rain has jewelled all my fingers;
In my hand the crickets sing,
And the moon's my golden ring.

Frost Song

HERE where the bee slept and the orchis lifted
Her honeying pipes of pearl, her velvet lip,
Only the swart leaves of the oak lie drifted
In sombre fellowship.

Here where the flame-weed set the lands alight,
Lies the bleak upland, webbed and crowned with
white.

Build high the logs, O love, and in thine eyes
Let me believe the summer lingers late.
We shall not miss her passive pageantries,
We are not desolate,
When on the sill, across the window bars,
Kind winter flings her flowers and her stars.

Dream River

WIND-SILVERED willows hedge the stream,
And all within is hushed and cool.
The water, in an endless dream,
Goes sliding down from pool to pool.
And every pool a sapphire is,
From shadowy deep to sunlit edge,
Ribbioned around with irises
And cleft with emerald spears of sedge.

O, every morn the winds are stilled,
The sunlight falls in amber bars.
O, every night the pools are filled
With silver brede of shaken stars.
O, every morn the sparrow flings
His elfin trills athwart the hush,
And here unseen at eve there sings
One crystal-throated hermit-thrush.

Swallows

O LITTLE hearts, beat home, beat home,
Here is no place to rest.
Night darkens on the falling foam
And on the fading west.
O little wings, beat home, beat home.
Love may no longer roam.

O, Love has touched the fields of wheat
And Love has crowned the corn,
And we must follow Love's white feet
Through all the ways of morn.
Through all the silver roads of air
We pass and have no care.

The silver roads of Love are wide,
O winds that turn, O stars that guide,
Sweet are the ways that Love has trod
Through the clear skies that reach to God.
But in the cliff-grass Love builds deep
A place where wandering wings may sleep.

The Pool

COME with me, follow me, swift as a moth,
Ere the wood-doves waken.
Lift the long leaves and look down, look down
Where the light is shaken,
Amber and brown,
On the woven ivory roots of the reed,
On a floating flower and a weft of weed
And a feather of froth.

Here in the night all wonders are,
Lapped in the lift of the ripple's swing,—
A silver shell and a shaken star,
And a white moth's wing.
Here the young moon when the mists uncloset
Swims like the bud of a golden rose.

I would live like an elf where the wild grapes
cling,
I would chase the thrush

The Pool

From the red rose-berries.
All the day long I would laugh and swing
With the black choke-cherries.
I would shake the bees from the milkweed
 blooms,
And cool, O cool,
Night after night I would leap in the pool,
And sleep with the fish in the roots of the rush.
Clear, O clear my dreams should be made
Of emerald light and amber shade,
Of silver shallows and golden glooms.
Sweet, O sweet my dreams should be
As the dark, sweet water enfolding me
Safe as a blind shell under the sea.

O Silver Rose

THE dark hour turns so slowly and so sweet,
The last still hour soft-fallen from the stars.
To-morrow I may kneel and touch thy feet,
O Rose of all Shiraz.

Lay wide thine amorous lattice to the south,
O Silver Rose, when roses breathe thy name,
And thou at dawn shalt feel upon thy mouth
The kiss I dared not claim.

Discrowned, dishonoured, reft of pride and
power,
From the red battle where they hailed me lord,
O Silver Rose, O sweet Pomegranate Flower,
I turn me to their sword.

Life hath so held me to an empty part,
Life hath so snared me, bound and made me
blind.

To-morrow I may rest upon thy heart,
For death shall prove more kind.

The Bridegroom of Cana

*"There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. . . .
And both Jesus was called, and His disciples, to the
marriage."*

VEIL thine eyes, O belovéd, my spouse,
Turn them away,
Lest in their light my life withdrawn
Dies as a star, as a star in the day,
As a dream in the dawn.

Slenderly hang the olive leaves
Sighing apart;
The rose and silver doves in the eaves
With a murmur of music bind our house.
Honey and wine in thy words are stored,
Thy lips are bright as the edge of a sword
That hath found my heart,
That hath found my heart.

The Bridegroom of Cana

Sweet, I have waked from a dream of thee,—
And of Him.

He who came when the songs were done.
From the net of thy smiles my heart went free
And the golden lure of thy love grew dim.
I turned to them asking, "Who is He,
Royal and sad, who comes to the feast
And sits Him down in the place of the least?"
And they said, "He is Jesus, the carpenter's son."

Hear how my harp on a single string
Murmurs of love.
Down in the fields the thrushes sing
And the lark is lost in the light above,
Lost in the infinite, glowing whole,
As I in thy soul,
As I in thy soul.

Love, I am fain for thy glowing grace
As the pool for the star, as the rain for the rill.
Turn to me, trust to me, mirror me
As the star in the pool, as the cloud in the sea.
Love, I looked awhile in His face
And was still.

The Bridegroom of Cana

The shaft of the dawn strikes clear and sharp:
Hush, my harp.

Hush, my harp, for the day is begun,
And the lifting, shimmering flight of the swallow
Breaks in a curve on the brink of morn,
Over the sycamores, over the corn.

Cling to me, cleave to me, prison me
As the mote in the flame, as the shell in the sea,
For the winds of the dawn say, "Follow, follow
Jesus Bar-Joseph, the carpenter's son."

A Mother in Egypt

"About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon the throne, even unto the firstborn of the maid-servant that is behind the mill."

Is the noise of grief in the palace over the river
For this silent one at my side?

There came a hush in the night, and he rose with
his hands a-quiver

Like lotus petals adrift on the swing of the tide.
O small soft hands, the day groweth old for
sleeping!

O small still feet, rise up, for the hour is late!
Rise up, my son, for I hear them mourning and
weeping

In the temple down by the gate.

Hushed is the face that was wont to brighten with
laughter

When I sang at the mill,

A Mother in Egypt

And silence unbroken shall greet the sorrowful
dawns hereafter,

The house shall be still.

Voice after voice takes up the burden of wailing,—

Do you heed, do you hear?—in the high-priest's
house by the wall;

But mine is the grief, and their sorrow is all un-
availing.

Will he wake at their call?

Something I saw of the broad, dim wings half
folding

The passionless brow.

Something I saw of the sword the shadowy hands
were holding,—

What matters it now?

I held you close, dear face, as I knelt and hark-
ened

To the wind that cried last night like a soul in sin,
When the broad, bright stars dropped down and
the soft sky darkened,

And the Presence moved therein.

A Mother in Egypt

I have heard men speak in the market-place of the
city,

Low voiced, in a breath,

Of a god who is stronger than ours, and who
knows not changing nor pity,

Whose anger is death.

Nothing I know of the lords of the outland races,

But Amun is gentle and Hathor the Mother is
mild,

And who would descend from the light of the
peaceful places

To war on a child?

Yet here he lies, with a scarlet pomegranate petal
Blown down on his cheek.

The slow sun sinks to the sand like a shield of
some burnished metal,

But he does not speak.

I have called, I have sung, but neither will hear
nor waken;

So lightly, so whitely he lies in the curve of my
arm,

A Mother in Egypt

Like a feather let fall from the bird that the
arrow hath taken.

Who could see him, and harm?

“The swallow flies home to her sleep in the eaves
of the altar,

And the crane to her nest,”—

So do we sing o’er the mill, and why, ah, why
should I falter,

Since he goes to his rest?

Does he play in their flowers as he played among
these with his mother?

Do the gods smile downward and love him and
give him their care?

Guard him well, O ye gods, till I come; lest the
wrath of that Other

Should reach to him there!

St. Yves' Poor

JEFFIK was there, and Matthieu, and brown Bran,
Warped in old wars and babbling of the sword,
And Jannedik, a white rose pinched and paled
With the world's frosts, and many more beside,
Lamed, rheumed and palsied, aged, impotent
Of all but hunger and blind lifted hands.

I set the doors wide at the given hour,
Took the great baskets piled with bread, the fish
Yet silvered of the sea, the curds of milk,
And called them, Brethren, brake, and blest, and
gave.

For O, my Lord, the house dove knows her nest
Above my window builded from the rain;
In the brown mere the heron finds her rest,
But these shall seek in vain.

And O, my Lord, the thrush may fold her wing,
The curlew seek the long lift of the seas,

St. Yves' Poor

The wild swan sleep amid his journeying,—
There is no rest for these.

Thy dead are sheltered; housed and warmed they
wait

Under the golden fern, the falling foam;
But these, Thy living, wander desolate
And have not any home.

I called them, Brethren, brake, and blest, and
gave.

Old Jeffik had her withered hand to show,
Young Jannedik had dreamed of death, and Bran
Would tell me wonders wrought on fields of war,
When Michael and his warriors rode the storm,
And all the heavens were thrilled with clanging
spears,—

Ah, God, my poor, my poor.—Till there came
one

Wrapped in foul rags, who caught me by the robe,
And pleaded, "Bread, my father."

In his hand

I laid the last loaf of the daily dole,
Saw on the palm a red wound like a star,

St. Yves' Poor

And bade him, "Let me bind it."

"These my wounds,"

He answered softly, "daily dost thou bind."

And I, "My son, I have not seen thy face.

But thy bruised feet have trodden on my heart.

I will get water for thee."

"These my hurts,"

Again he answered, "daily dost thou wash."

And I once more, "My son, I know thee not,

But the bleak wind blows bitter from the sea,

And even the gorse is perished. Rest thou here."

And he again, "My rest is in thy heart.

I take from thee as I have given to thee.

Dost thou not know Me, Breton?"

I,—“My Lord!”—

A scent of lilies on the cold sea-wind,

A thin, white blaze of wings, a face of flame

Over the gateway, and the vision passed,

And there were only Matthieu and brown Bran,

And the young girl, the foam-white Jannedik,

Wondering to see their father rapt from them,

And Jeffik weeping o'er her withered hand.

The Little Sister of the Prophet

"If there arise among you a prophet or dreamer . . ."

I HAVE left a basket of dates
In the cool dark room that is under the vine,
Some curds set out in two little crimson plates
And a flask of the amber wine,
And cakes most cunningly beaten
Of savoury herbs, and spice, and the delicate
 wheaten
Flour that is best,
And all to lighten his spirit and sweeten his rest.

This morning he cried, "Awake,
And see what the wonderful grace of the Lord
 hath revealed!"
And we ran for his sake,
But 'twas only the dawn outspread o'er our
 father's field,

The Little Sister of the Prophet

And the house of the potter white in the valley
below.

But his hands were upraised to the east and he
cried to us, "So

Ye may ponder and read

The strength and the beauty of God out-rolled
in a fiery screed!"

Then the little brown mother smiled,

As one does on the words of a well-loved child,
And, "Son," she replied, "have the oxen been
watered and fed?

For work is to do, though the skies be never so
red,

And already the first sweet hours of the day are
spent."

And he sighed, and went.

Will he come from the byre

With his head all misty with dreams, and his
eyes on fire,

Shaking us all with the weight of the words of
his passion?

The Little Sister of the Prophet

I will give him raisins instead of dates,
And wreath the young leaves on the little red plates.
I will put on my new head-tyre,
And braid my hair in a comelier fashion.
Will he note? Will he mind?
Will he touch my cheek as he used to, and laugh
and be kind?

Pieter Marinus

LORD, I have known all fruits of this thy world;
Like Solomon king, I have been fain of all,—
War, women, and wine,—but mine was spirit of
Nantes.

And now, O Lord, I'm old and fain for Thee.
But, Lord, my soul's so grimed and weather-
worn,

So warped and wrung with all iniquities,
Piracies, brawls, and cheated revenues,
There's not a saint but would look twice at it.

So, when my time comes, send no angels down
With lutes, and harps, and foreign instruments,
To pipe old Pieter's spirit up to heaven
Past his tall namesake sturdy at his post.

But let me lie awhile in these Thy seas.
Let the soft Gulf Stream and the long South
Drift,

Pieter Marinus

And the swift tides that rim the Labrador,
Beat on my soul and wash it clean again.

And when Thy waves have smoothed me of my
sins,

White as the sea-mew or the wind-spun foam,

Clean as the clear-cut images of stars

That swing between the swells,—then, then, O
Lord,

Lean out, lean out from heaven and call me thus,

“Come up, thou soul of Pieter Marinus,”

And I'll go home.

In the Gardens of Shushan

BE pitiful! Her lips have touched this cool
Clear stream that sets the long green leaves astir.
The very doves that dream beside the pool
Sang their soft notes to her.

For her these doors that claim the amorous south,
Bound in red bronze and stayed with cedar-wood.
And here the bees sought honey from her mouth,
So like a flower she stood.

For her the globed pomegranates grew, and all
Sweet savoury fruits rose perfect from their
flower.

Here has her soul known silence and the fall
Of each enchanted hour.

Under her feet all beauty was laid low,
In her deep eyes all beauty was made clear.

In the Gardens of Shushan

When the king called her through the evening
glow,

“O Vashti, I am here!”

Still the sweet wells return to me her face,
Still her lost name on every wind is blown.
The shadows and the silence of this place
Are hers alone.

Père Lalemant

I LIFT the Lord on high,
Under the murmuring hemlock boughs, and see
The small birds of the forest lingering by
And making melody.

These are mine acolytes and these my choir,
And this mine altar in the cool green shade,
Where the wild soft-eyed does draw nigh
Wondering, as in the byre
Of Bethlehem the oxen heard Thy cry
And saw Thee, unafraid.

My boatmen sit apart,
Wolf-eyed, wolf-sinewed, stiller than the trees.
Help me, O Lord, for very slow of heart
And hard of faith are these.
Cruel are they, yet Thy children. Foul are they,
Yet wert Thou born to save them utterly.
Then make me as I pray,

Père Lalemant

Just to their hates, kind to their sorrows, wise
After their speech, and strong before their free
Indomitable eyes.

Do the French lilies reign
Over Mont Royal and Stadacona still?
Up the St. Lawrence comes the spring again,
Crowning each southward hill
And blossoming pool with beauty, while I roam
Far from the perilous folds that are my home,
There where we built St. Ignace for our needs,
Shaped the rough roof tree, turned the first sweet
sod,
St. Ignace and St. Louis, little beads
On the rosary of God.

Pines shall Thy pillars be,
Fairer than those Sidonian cedars brought
By Hiram out of Tyre, and each birch-tree
Shines like a holy thought.
But come no worshippers; shall I confess,
St. Francis-like, the birds of the wilderness?
O, with Thy love my lonely head uphold.

Père Lalemant

A wandering shepherd I, who hath no sheep;
A wandering soul, who hath no scrip, nor gold,
Nor anywhere to sleep.

My hour of rest is done;
On the smooth ripple lifts the long canoe;
The hemlocks murmur sadly as the sun
Slants his dim arrows through.
Whither I go I know not, nor the way,
Dark with strange passions, vexed with heathen
 charms,
Holding I know not what of life or death;
Only be Thou beside me day by day,
Thy rod my guide and comfort, underneath
Thy everlasting arms.

Bega

FROM the clouded belfry calling,
Hear my soft ascending swells;
Hear my notes like swallows falling;
I am Bega, least of bells.
When great Turkeful rolls and rings
All the storm-touched turret swings,
Echoing battle, loud and long.
When great Tatwin wakening roars
To the far-off shining shores,
All the seamen know his song.
I am Bega, least of bells:
In my throat my message swells.
I with all the winds a-thrill,
Murmuring softly, murmuring still,
 "God around me, God above me,
 God to guard me, God to love me."

I am Bega, least of bells,
Weaving wonder, wind-born spells.

Bega

High above the morning mist,
Wreathed in rose and amethyst,
Still the dreams of music float
Silver from my silver throat,
Whispering beauty, whispering peace.
When great Tatwin's golden voice
Bids the listening land rejoice,
When great Turkeful rings and rolls
Thunder down to trembling souls,
Then my notes like curlews flying,
Lifting, falling, sinking, sighing,
Softly answer, softly cease.
I with all the airs at play
Murmuring sweetly, murmuring say,
 "God around me, God above me,
 God to guard me, God to love me."

In a Monastery Garden

OVER the long salt ridges
And the gold sea-poppies between,
They builded them wild-briar hedges,
A church and a cloistered green.
And when they were done with their praises,
And the tides on the Fore beat slow,
Under the white cliff-daisies
They laid them down in a row.

Porphyry, Paul, and Peter,
Jasper, and Joachim,—
Was the psaltery music sweeter
Than the throat of the thrush to him?
Tired of their drones and their dirges,
Where the young cliff-rabbits play,
Wet with the salt of the surges,
They laid them down for a day.

In a Monastery Garden

One may not call to the other
There on the rim of the deep,
Only the youngest brother
Lies and smiles in his sleep.
When the wild swan's shadow passes,
When the ripe fruit falls to the sod,
When the faint moth flies in the grasses
He dreams in the hands of God.

Here for his hopes there follow
The violets one by one.
The dove is here and the swallow
And the young leaf seeking the sun.
And here when the last sail darkens
And the last lone path is trod,
Under the rose he harkens
And smiles in the eyes of God.

A Child's Song

WHEN the Child played in Galilee,
He had no wine-clear maple leaves,
No west winds singing of the sea
Over the frosted sheaves;
But with pale myrrh His head was bound
And crowned.

When the Child lived in Nazareth,
He watched the golden anise seed,
With daisies white in the wind's breath,
And hyssop flowering for His need,
While the late crocus from the sod
Flamed for her God.

When the Child dwelt in Palestine,
Over the brooks the willow grew,
Olive and aspen, oak and pine,
Sweet sycamore and yew,
But one dark Tree of all the seven
Stood high as heaven.

A Child's Song of Christmas

My counterpane is soft as silk,
My blankets white as creamy milk.
The hay was soft to Him, I know,
Our little Lord of long ago.

Above the roofs the pigeons fly
In silver wheels across the sky.
The stable-doves they cooed to them,
Mary and Christ in Bethlehem.

Bright shines the sun across the drifts,
And bright upon my Christmas gifts.
They brought Him incense, myrrh, and gold,
Our little Lord who lived of old.

O, soft and clear our mother sings
Of Christmas joys and Christmas things.
God's holy angels sang to them,
Mary and Christ in Bethlehem.

A Child's Song of Christmas

Our hearts they hold all Christmas dear,
And earth seems sweet and heaven seems near,
O, heaven was in His sight, I know,
That little Child of long ago.

Youth's End

I HAVE held my life too nigh,
Spring and harvest, love and laughter, smile and
sigh.

I should have held it lightly, like a young leaf
rent in haste

From the willow in the waste.

A moment in my fingers; then it fluttered, then
it fled,

A little flame of red,

To the God-beholding desert where the soundless
years go by,—

I have held my life too high.

I have held my death too dear,

Shame or honour, peace or peril, pride or fear.

I should have held it softly, as the little cloud
that flies

When the heron takes the skies.

Youth's End

I should have held it kindly as a passing whisper,
—“Friend,
Here's the end,
Here the silver cord is loosened and the bowl is
broken here,”—
But I held my death too dear.

Jasper's Song

WHO goes down through the slim green shallows,
Soon, so soon?

Dawn is hard on the heels of the moon,
But never a lily the day-star knows
Is white, so white as the one who goes
Armed and shod, when the hyacinths darken.
Then hark, O harken!

And rouse the moths from the deep rose-mallows,
Call the wild hares down from the fallows,
Gather the silk of the young sea-poppies,
The bloom of the thistle, the bells of the foam;
Bind them all with a brown owl's feather,
Snare the winds in a golden tether,
Chase the clouds from the gipsy's weather, and
follow, O follow the white spring home.

Who goes past with the wind that chilled us,
Late, so late?
Fortune leans on the farmer's gate,

Jasper's Song

Watching the round sun low in the south,
With a plume in his cap and a rose at his mouth.
But O, for the folk who were free and merry
There's never so much as a red rose-berry.
But old earth's warm as the wine that filled us,
And the fox and the little grey mouse shall build
us

Walls of the sweet green gloom of the cedar,
A roof of bracken, a curtain of whin;
One more rouse ere the bowl reposes
Low in the dust of our lost red roses,
One more song ere the cold night closes, and
welcome, O welcome the dark death in!

The Hillman's Lass

OVER the field where the grass is cool,
(Follow the road who must!)
With a song for the beech and the brown pool,
And the noiseless tread in the dust,
With a laugh for the lazy hours that go,
And the folk who pass us by.
(The trees they grow so broad, so low,
They shut me from the sky.)

Here be strawberries wild and sweet,
(Follow the road who may!)
And here's a rest for a bairn's feet
And a kiss at the close o' day.
And here's a cloud from the shining sea
Like a white moth in the night.
(On the edge o' the barley field, may be
The stars would show more bright.)

Cut me a flute where the reeds are brown.
(Follow the road who will!)

The Hillman's Lass

O, I'll dress you fair in a green gown
And a cloak that is finer still.
Your sleeves shall be o' the fairies' lawn,
Your shoon as red as the rose.
(Do you think that the wind which wakes at
dawn
Will bring us a breath o' the snows?)

O, the world's wide, and the world is long.
(Follow the road who may!)
And here's a lilt of the wild song
The Romany pipers play.
And "Mine," it sings, "is the moon's shield,
And the cloak o' the cloud is mine."
(Do you think that the lowland clover field
Is sweet as the upland pine?)

The Shepherd Boy

WHEN the red moon hangs over the fold,
And the cypress shadow is rimmed with gold,
O little sheep, I have laid me low,
My face against the old earth's face,
Where one by one the white moths go,
And the brown bee has his sleeping place.
And then I have whispered, Mother, hear,
For the owls are awake and the night is near,
And whether I lay me near or far
No lips shall kiss me,
No eye shall miss me,
Saving the eye of a cold white star.

And the old brown woman answers mild,
Rest you safe on my heart, O child.
Many a shepherd, many a king,
I fold them safe from their sorrowing.
Gwenever's heart is bound with dust,

The Shepherd Boy

Tristram dreams of the dappled doe,
But the bugle moulders, the blade is rust;
Stilled are the trumpets of Jericho,
And the tired men sleep by the walls of Troy.
Little and lonely,
Knowing me only,
Shall I not comfort you, shepherd-boy?

When the wind wakes in the apple-tree,
And the shy hare feeds on the wild fern stem,
I say my prayers to the Trinity,—
The prayers that are three and the charms that
are seven
To the angels guarding the towers of heaven,—
And I lay my head on her raiment's hem,
Where the young grass darkens the strawberry
star,
Where the iris buds and the bellworts are.
All night I hear her breath go by
Under the arch of the empty sky.
All night her heart beats under my head,
And I lie as still as the ancient dead,

The Shepherd Boy

Warm as the young lambs there with the sheep.
I and no other,
Close to my Mother,
Fold my hands in her hands, and sleep.

Duna

WHEN I was a little lad
With folly on my lips,
Fain was I for journeying
All the seas in ships.
But now across the southern swell,
Every dawn I hear
The little streams of Duna
Running clear.

When I was a young man,
Before my beard was grey,
All to ships and sailormen
I gave my heart away.
But I'm weary of the sea-wind,
I'm weary of the foam,
And the little stars of Duna
Call me home.

My Father He Was a Fisherman

My father he was a fisherman,
That wrought at the break o' day,
And hither and thither the long tides ran
I' the long blue bay.

"The tides go up and the tides go down,
But what do you know of the sea?"
Her voice, i' the long grey streets o' the town,
Is singing to me.

"What do you know of the sails at dawn,
What of the shell-white foam?"
Cheerly and sweet, from a world withdrawn,
They are calling me home.

"What is the grief you fain would tell
When your eyes are turned on me?"
O, well it was taught and I learned it well,—
The grief o' the sea.

My Father He Was a Fisherman

“Where do you travel and where do you sleep,
Where shall you take your rest?”

At the inn that shelters my father, deep

I' the seas o' the west.

Jennifer's Lad

SWEET Jennifer came calling me
Along the shining beach.
"There's green upon the hawthorn tree,
There's bloom upon the peach.
O, April's found the upland larch,
The hazel in the hollow,"—
But louder was the snare-drum with its "March,
march, march!"
And clearer called the bugle, "Will you follow?"

Young Jennifer came seeking me
With love upon her lips.
"O, all kind angels keep the sea
And fortune guard the ships.
The Autumn winds have rent the larch,
The south has won the swallow,"—
But clearer beat the snare-drum with its "March,
march, march!"
And sweeter sang the bugle, "Will you follow?"

Three Island Songs

AFTER the wind in the wood,
Peace, and the night.
After the bond and the brood,
Flight.

After the height and the hush
Where the wild hawk swings,
Heart of the earth-loving thrush
Shaken with wings.

After the bloom and the leaf
Rain on the nest.
After the splendour and grief,
Rest.

After the hills and the far
Glories and gleams,
Cloud, and the dawn of a star,
And dreams.

O THE grey rocks of the islands and the hemlock
green above them,

Three Island Songs

The foam beneath the wild rose bloom, the star
above the shoal.

When I am old and weary I'll wake my heart
to love them,

For the blue ways of the islands are wound about
my soul.

Here in the early even when the young grey dew
is falling,

And the king-heron seeks his mate beyond the
loneliest wild,

Still your heart in the twilight, and you'll hear
the river calling

Through all her outmost islands to seek her last-
born child.

I SAT among the green leaves, and heard the nuts
falling,

The broad red butterflies were gold against the
sun,

But in between the silence and the sweet birds
calling

The nuts fell one by one.

Three Island Songs

Why should they fall and the year but half over?
Why should sorrow seek me and I so young and
kind?

The leaf is on the bough and the dew is on the
clover,

But the green nuts are falling in the wind.

O, I gave my lips away and all my soul behind
them.

Why should trouble follow and the quick tears
start?

The little birds may love and fly with only God
to mind them,

But the green nuts are falling on my heart.

Serenade

DARK is the iris meadow,
Dark is the ivory tower,
And lightly the young moth's shadow
Sleeps on the passion-flower.

Gone are our day's red roses.
So lovely and lost and few,
But the first star uncloses
A silver bud in the blue.

Night, and a flame in the embers
Where the seal of the years was set,—
When the almond-bough remembers
How shall my heart forget?

The Lovers of Marchaid

DOMINIC came riding down, sworded, straight
and splendid,
Drave his hilt against her door, flung a golden
chain.
Said: "I'll teach your lips a song sweet as his
that's ended,
Ere the white rose call the bee, the almond flower
again."

But he only saw her head bent within the gloom
Over heaps of bridal thread bright as apple-bloom,
Silver silk like rain that spread across the driving
loom.

Dreaming Fanch, the cobbler's son, took his tools
and laces,
Wrought her shoes of scarlet dye, shoes as pale
as snow;

The Lovers of Marchaid

"They shall lead her wildrose feet all the fairy
paces
Danced along the road of love, the road such feet
should go"—

But he only saw her eyes turning from his gift
Out towards the silver skies where the white
clouds drift,
Where the wild gerfalcon flies, where the last
sails lift.

Bran has built his homestead high where the hills
may shield her,
Where the young bird waits the spring, where the
dawns are fair,
Said: "I'll name my trees for her, since I may not
yield her
Stars of morning for her feet, of evening for her
hair."

The Lovers of Marchaid

But he did not see them ride, seven dim sail and
more,
All along the harbour-side, white from shore to
shore,
Nor heard the voices of the tide crying at her
door.

Jean-Marie has touched his pipe down beside the
river
When the young fox bends the fern, when the
folds are still,
Said: "I send her all the gifts that my love may
give her,—
Golden notes like golden birds to seek her at my
will."

But he only found the waves, heard the sea-gull's
cry,
In and out the ocean caves, underneath the sky,
All above the wind-washed graves where dead sea-
men lie.

The House's Setting

HERE is no hedge of yewe to hold in griefe,
No cypresse nor long willow for despaire.
But the young birch displayes his cheerfulle leaf
In tracerie most faire.

Where the sunne falls at morn stand poplars
seven

Where freely I of all sweete joyes may borrowe,
An elm that lifts his prayerfulle arms to Heaven,
And three tall pines for sorrowe.

Deus Misereatur

PLEASANT the ways whereon our feet were led,
Sweet the young hills, the valleys of content,
But now the hours of dew and dream have fled.
Lord, we are spent.

We did not heed Thy warning in the skies,
We have not heard Thy voice nor known Thy
 fold;
But now the world is darkening to our eyes.
Lord, we grow old.

Now the sweet stream turns bitter with our tears,
Now dies the star we followed in the west,
Now are we sad and ill at ease with years.
Lord, we would rest.

Lo, our proud lamps are emptied of their light,
Weary our hands to toil, our feet to roam;
Our day is past and swiftly falls Thy night.
Lord, lead us home.

Fame

HAVE I played fellowship with night, to see
The allied armies break our gates at dawn
And let our general in? By Bacchus, no!
I have not left my stall, sir, I'm too poor
For lazy prentices to hand my wares,—
Such delicate chains, like amber linked with love!
Such silvered pins, like hate to let love out!—
What know I? But my Guidarello went
To the fountain of the coppersmiths, when first
The double cypress showed upon the east.
He's home, poor fool, hoarse as a moulting bird
From loud throat-loyalty.

“The banners burn
Still in my soul,” he cries, “as then in air.
The grey air, the grey houses, and the flowers,
The flowers, my father! Thyme and twisted
sweets

From the blue hills I dream of, and thin bells
Of faery folds; pomegranates spun in flame,

Fame

Flame of red rose and golden, flame of sound
Blown from hot-throated trumpets, and the flame
Of her proud eyes!—

She rode beside the duke
In velvet coloured as a pansy is
And threaded round with gold. Her mantle
strained

On the warm wind behind her, golden too,
Gold as the spires of lilies, and her hair
And her dark eyes were danced across with
gold.”

Gold, gold, poor fool, and she was bought
for gold,

A golden grief to ride at a duke's rein.
Eh well! The great grow love-in-idleness
About their courts. Did Guidarello see
Our general too? “A little, tired old man,
Clad in worn sables with a silver star,”
He told me, “fain to find his house and sleep.”

Kwannon

Kwannon, the Japanese goddess of mercy, is represented with many hands, typifying generosity and kindness. In one of these hands she is supposed to hold an axe, wherewith she severs the threads of human lives.

I AM the ancient one, the many-handed,
The merciful am I.
Here where the black pine bends above the sea
They bring their gifts to me—
Spoil of the foreshore where the corals lie,
Fishes of ivory, and amber stranded,
And carven beads
Green as the fretted fringes of the weeds.

Age after age, I watch the long sails pass.
Age after age, I see them come once more
Home, as the grey-winged pigeon to the grass,
The white crane to the shore.
Goddess am I of heaven and this small town

Kwannon

Above the beaches brown.

And here the children bring me cakes, and
flowers,

And all the strange sea-treasures that they find,
For "She," they say, "the Merciful, is ours,
And she," they say, "is kind."

Camphor and wave-worn sandalwood for burn-
ing

They bring to me alone,
Shells that are veined like irises, and those
Curved like the clear bright petals of a rose.
Wherefore an hundredfold again returning
I render them their own—

Full-freighted nets that flash among the foam,
Laughter and love, and gentle eyes at home,
Cool of the night, and the soft air that swells
My silver temple bells.

Winds of the spring, the little flowers that shine
Where the young barley slopes to meet the pine,
Gold of the charlock, guerdon of the rain,
I give to them again.

Kwannon

Yet though the fishing boats return full-laden
Out of the broad blue east,
Under the brown roofs pain is their hand-
maiden,
And mourning is their feast.
Yea, though my many hands are raised to bless,
I am not strong to give them happiness.

Sorrow comes swiftly as the swallow flying,
O, little lives, that are so quickly done!
Peace is my raiment, mercy is my breath,
I am the gentle one.
When they are tired of sorrow and of sighing
I give them death.

Mons Angelorum

Moses, Joshua, the Three Angels of the Universe

Evening: a slope of Pisgah

Moses—Our span of life is lessening with the years,

Our little sun rolls swiftlier to its end
Among the eternal stars. It is a feather
Blown from a careless lip into the dark,
A fallen feather, the lily of a day,
Brimming with blood and tears instead of
dew,

And dying with its sleep. Having known
life,

Having known day, I pass into the night;
Having long spoken with God, I hold my
peace;

Having long held the sword, I lay it down,

Mons Angelorum

And the new watch relieves me. Is all
well?

Joshua—O father of my soul, I cannot tell.

The burden of the Lord is heavy on me,
And I am broken beneath it.

Moses— Since I knew,

All my desires and cares have gone from me.

Rather I think on old forgotten things—

A song within the temple-court, to her,

Isis, the Lady of Love. How white she sat

Above the crowded gate! I was a boy:

I ran and laid a lotus on her knees,

Dreaming she smiled in answer. Ah, those
dreams

Far on the shining level of the sands,—

Thebes and old Tanis builded of a'cloud!

The reeds beside the river, those sweet trees

Full of warm buds that ripen and unclose

At eve; the barges passing on the Nile

Like golden water-fowl with ivory wings;

The gardens and the great pomegranate
flowers,

Mons Angelorum

And she, my gentle mother in Mizraim,
Calling me, "Mesu, Mesu."

Joshua— I cannot think.

My sorrow stays me and my grief prevents.
Yet there are heathen foes and wars to come.
I take thy sword. I cannot take thy soul,
Master of Law, unshaken friend of God,
But I can fight for Israel.

Moses— Fight, and stand

Firmly for God. Jehovah is salvation.
And now, beloved son in all but blood,
Go, get you down again.

Joshua— A little longer,

Leave me a little longer with you, lord!

Moses—No longer, for the gates of life are
lonely,

Out of the dark man cometh to his life,
Into the dark he goeth.

Down, look down,

Down to the clustered tents, each with its
lives

Of foolish children, vexed with many fears,
Agonies, hopes, beliefs inherited,

Mons Angelorum

Dark hates, fond dreams, divine humilities.
Shall they go leaderless from stream to
stream,

Following the far-flung visions of despair,
These that have been my sheep?

Joshua— I cannot, father.
I am a man of war and not of wisdom.
They will not know my voice nor follow
me.

Moses—Man, is it thy faint voice shall be up-
lifted,
To soothe the fearful and uphold the strong.
To lead the unshaken tribes to victory
Against the men of Amalek and Ai,
Lords of the plain and coast? Is it thy
strength?

Nay, but Jehovah's in thee. As the cloud
Filling the empty valley of the hills,
As the white flood along the water-courses
That once were barren, so His strength will
pass

Into the pits and runnels of thy soul.

Mons Angelorum

Fight, for the Lord is with thee. Stand
thou firm.

Joshua—Lo, I would rather stay and die with
thee

Than pass with shining banners and with
song

Of silver shawms and trumpets, in thy place
Over the river Jordan.

Moses—Nay, I pass
Over a deeper river, with no songs,
No mighty trumpetings, no pride of banners.

Toil have I borne but triumph is not mine.
Once, once mine eyes shall see the Promised
Land,

Her forts and towers, cities and pleasant
fields,

Her palms and cedars, vines and olive trees,
And then be darkened. Here's my heritage,
Here by these mighty chasms, these God-
ward peaks,

My last resort, my lone abiding place.

Mons Angelorum

See, the night comes. How is it with thee,
son?

Joshua—A cloud has drawn between us and the
plain,

A darkness moves between us and the sky,
Full of vague voices, mighty whisperings,
Wings, and the sound of them.

O, never man
Has breathed such chilling air as this which
blows

Out of the dark. O, never man has heard
Such sounds as these which beat upon my
soul,

Known, yet unknown; familiar, yet most
dread!

Lord, must I go?

Moses— This is the wind of death,
And this the cold that lies without the
world,

And these the sounds that thrill the un-
trodden void

Beyond the lonelier stars. Go down, go
down

Mons Angelorum

To darkened Israel mourning in his tents.
I can no longer see thee. Stand thou firm.
(*Joshua goes; the cloud surrounds Moses.*)

O ye celestial presences, great shapes
With terrible fair faces, towering wings,—
Wings with the wine-deep glow of amethyst,
Sheath over sheath like folded water-buds
Lit with an inward flame; wings pale as
foam,

Faint plumes showered with silver; wings
serene

Uplifted in a radiant arc of dawn,—
Unchain the prisoned pinions of this soul,
Say to the blind bird, Fly. Bid life recede,
A bubble before the advancing wave of
death.

From my youth upward I have spoken of
death,

Nor knew the word so sweet. There's music
in it,

Music to break the heart. O, heavenly
guards,

Looking so long in your immortal eyes

Mons Angelorum

Dead, to the dead, and am no more re-
membered

Upon the lips of men.

Those sceptred kings,
The solemn dead of old Mizraim, who sit
Forever in the sun beside their tombs,
With blank eyes smiling on eternity,
Crowned with the reed and lotus, do they
live

More than their grass and lilies? Those I
knew,

Princes and scribes, lords of the desert,
priests

Learned above the wit of common minds,
Captains and merchants, rulers over gold,
Feathers and spices, emeralds, ivories,
Brought to the feet of Pharaoh: what of
them?

What of the King, Lord of the North and
South,

Son of the Sun, like to the Sun forever?

A sun? A darkened light, a star o'er-
whelmed,

Mons Angelorum

When his fierce horsemen sank beneath that
surge

Whose crest was blood and terror,—when
there died

On one hushed night, all the firstborn of
Egypt.

O night divine, I set thine excellence
Above the twice-crowned noon. Here is no
star,

No slenderest crescent poised above the
world,

No lingering love of day. But the soft
dark

Folds inward as a flower, enfolding me,
My length of little days, wisdom and grief,
Light as a drop of rain.

Angel of Dreams— Tender is night,
But tenderer far the limits of this death,
This dream-encompassed city. Here no
sound

Shall wake thee, from thy sleep no storm
disturb,

Mons Angelorum

Though here all storms are born. Tempest
and cloud,

Thunder and hail, the mightiest airs of God,
The hosts of night, the hot triumphant
dawn,

Seasons, and times, and days, unknown shall
march

O'er thy surrendered head.

Moses— O loneliest rest!

On my lost grave only the winds shall
mourn,

The white rain do me service, the sad stars
Age after age with endless circling eyes
View this last desolation. In thy hands,
Into thy hands, O death. Break the worn
thread

That binds the rifted pattern of the loom.
O King of kings, forsake not now Thy
servant.

*Angel of Darkness—*Lo, the black crags leap to
the vaulted cloud,

Towering without a sound. The dark takes
substance

Mons Angelorum

In domes and depths of mightiest design
And seals him from the world. Pillared
like Thebes,
Straight as the tall palm-orchard lift the
walls
Of this vast grave. Life has no meaning
here,
Light has no name nor place. O human
heart,
Fain for the little shows of grief, for tears
And kindlier sepulchre, no king shall sleep
So royally housed as thou.

Moses— Draw near, draw near.
The string is all but parted. Shape thy
wings
Into a roof of silver silences,
A dome of deep repose. O murmuring
flood,
O tide of death lifting the weed of life,
O passive arbiter, indifferent power
In whose still hand the kingdoms of the
world
Lie like a beggar's coin, beneath whose heel

Mons Angelorum

Nations are drifted dust, accept thou me.

The bubble of life is broken.

Angel of Light—

Life begins.

Cover his face, kind Darkness, with thy
wings

Smooth as the wild swan's breast. Let no
wind wake

An echo in this holy solitude.

Let the enduring seasons with soft tread

Circle these sacred hills; no falling star

Shiver the fine perfection of repose.

God hath his life. Guard Thou his mighty
dust.

Angel of Darkness—I am the firstborn angel.

Ere this world

Was shapen, I endured within the void

Waiting the word of God. Beyond this
world

I shall endure, when the young stars are
driven

Outworn in dust along the roads of space,

Blown by the breath of chaos. When this
plan,

Mons Angelorum

This present firmament, vision and light,
Princes of heaven, dominions, powers, are
past,
I shall remain about the eternal throne
Veiling the thoughts of God. Leave him
with me,
Ye younger spirits; such silence is too old
For your bright souls to bear. Leave me
my dead.

*(The angels of Light and Dreams take flight.
The angel of Darkness covers Moses with
his wings.)*

The dead are mine. Swift they come down
to me.

The little life they suffer, their frail dream
Is past. Here is no memory, here no hope,
No reason, no despair nor happiness.

Only the dust and I. It is His will.

Voices of Israel—Who now shall stand between
us and our God?

A Saxon Epitaph

The earth builds on the earth

Castles and towers;

The earth saith of the earth:

All shall be ours.

Yea, though they plant and reap

The rye and the corn,

Lo, they were bond to Sleep

Ere they were born.

Yea, though the blind earth sows

For the fruit and the sheaf,

They shall harvest the leaf of the rose

And the dust of the leaf.

Pride of the sword and power

Are theirs at their need

Who shall rule but the root of the
flower

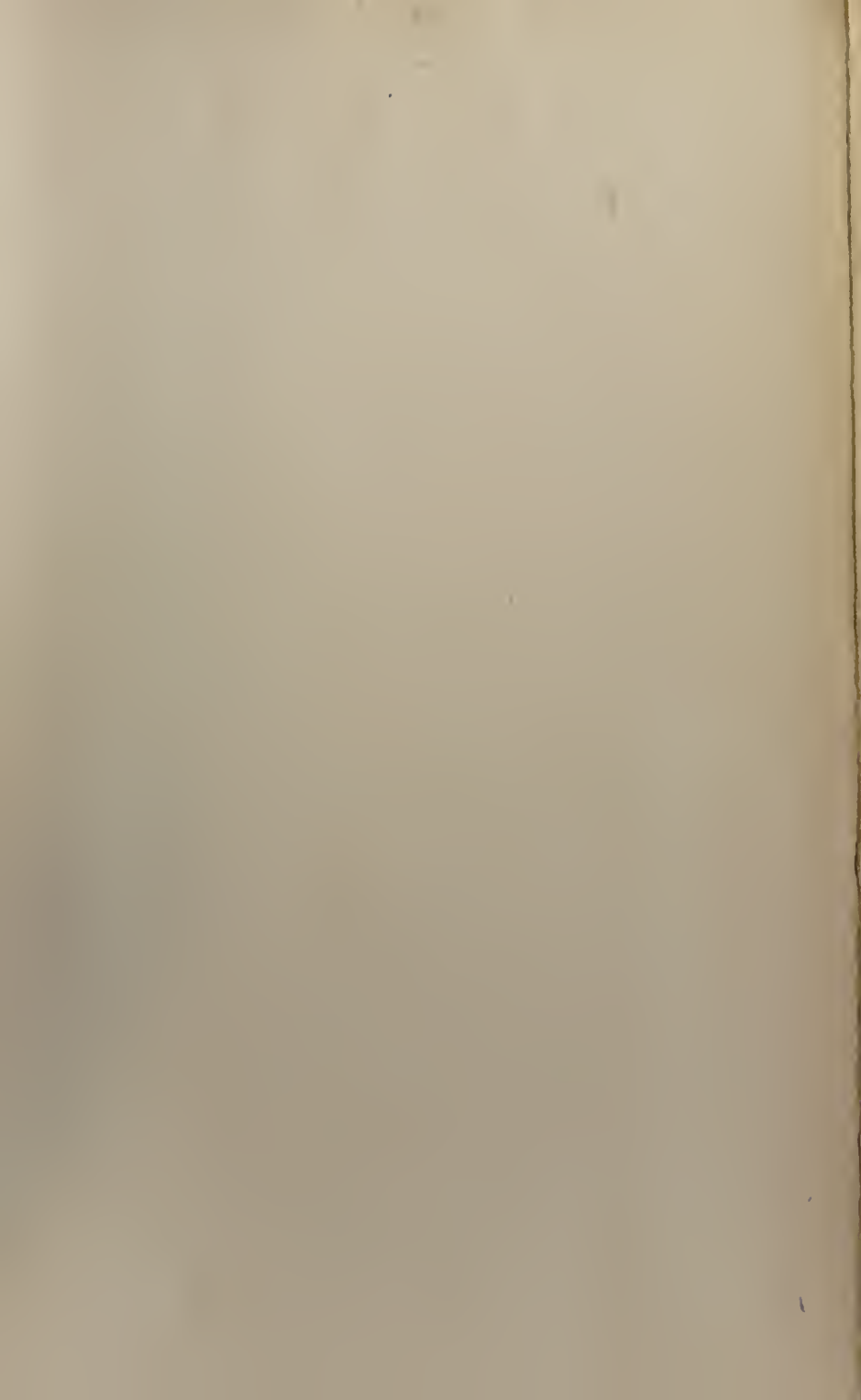
The fall of the seed.

A Saxon Epitaph

They who follow the flesh
In splendour and tears,
They shall rest and clothe them afresh
In the fulness of years.

From the dream of the dust they came
As the dawn set free.
They shall pass as the flower of the
flame
Or the foam of the sea.

*The earth builds on the earth
Cities and towers.
The earth saith of the earth:
All shall be ours.*



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Pickthall, Marjorie Christie

The lamp of poor souls and other
poems

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